

P 210430Z NOV 08
FM AMEMBASSY MAJURO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2214
INFO CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
CDRUSAKA KWAJALEIN MH
AMEMBASSY MAJURO

UNCLAS MAJURO 000129

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: PREL MARR RM
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR TALKS FIBER CABLE WITH TOMEING

REF: A. A:MAJURO 0128
1B. B:FAIRLAMB - GRIGSBY EMAILS 11/20

¶11. During the Ambassador's November 20 meeting with President Tomeing and his advisors, Minister in Assistance Loeak asked for an update on the status of the submarine fiber optic cable project, saying that NTA manager Tony Muller was off island to brief the Micronesian Chief Executive Summit, and that the Cabinet had not yet been given an updated brief. COMMENT: President Tomeing did not attend this year's summit, stating he was staying in the RMI to work on the vital LUA issues. Foreign Minister deBrum was sent to the summit in his stead. END COMMENT

¶12. The Ambassador shared with the President the latest available information, namely that the length of the proposed lease had been returned to 25 years, the Rural Utility Service loan for the RMI had been approved in principal and without the need for a GRMI guarantee, but that there was still the need for the FSM and RMI to establish a combined 3 million USD escrow account to pay for possible breakdowns in the cable. The Ambassador also pointed out the erroneous article in this week's Marshall Islands Journal, and his concern over its lack of accuracy.

¶13. The President thanked the Ambassador for providing the latest information and Minister Loeak stated that the Cabinet will ask Minister of Transportation and Communications Momotaro brief them further.

BISHOP